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Arrest Made in Everett Fire

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan, Everett Fire Chief David Butler and Everett Police Chief Steven Mazzie said an arrest has been made in yesterday's fire at 326 Main Street, Everett. Brandon Kwedor, age 20, of Methuen, has been arrested and charged with arson of a dwelling and causing injury to a firefighter. He will be arraigned tomorrow in Malden District Court.

Coan said, "Arson is not a victimless crime. It displaces people from their homes, interrupts businesses, impacts city revenues and resources and in this case injured a firefighter." Citing data from the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System he added, "A firefighter is twice as likely to be injured at an intentionally set structure fire than fighting a structure fire generally."

Chief Butler said, "I want to commend the investigative team for efforts to quickly determine the cause of the fire and bring the arsonist to justice." He added, "There is no connection between this fire and any other fire in Everett."

Chief Mazzie said, "We want the citizens of Everett to know that this incident had nothing to do with immigration status as was earlier reported". He added, "The quick response and teamwork exhibited by the investigators in solving this case, is an indication of how serious we take criminal activity in Everett".

The building housed two commercial properties with ten apartments above. At least 35 people were reportedly displaced by the fire that caused an estimated \$500,000 in property damage. All the building's occupants escaped but one firefighter was injured. Chief Butler said, "We believe the fact that the smoke alarms were working prevented injuries and deaths to the occupants by giving them time to escape this early morning blaze".

The fire was jointly investigated by the Everett Fire Department, Everett Police Department, State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).